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Exploration and Discovery.

THE LATEST FROM PETRIE.

THE RAMESSEUM, LUXOR, February 14, 1896.

MY DEAR BREASTED:

I am very glad to hear that you are getting on well and that your friends see their way to help the E. R. A. (Egyptian Research Account). We shall have some more material for you this year. . . .

Now for results. The Ramesseum is of Ramses II—the only thing left unchanged. The chapel of Uazmes was rebuilt by Amenhotep III, as his ring was under the door sill. The temple next south is of Tahutmes IV—yet unnamed in maps. Next is a big tomb of Khonsu arduus, goldsmith of the temple of Amen, XXV dynasty. Then comes the leveled plain with a scarp of rock-gravel on the *W* and *N*, marked — — on maps; and on the plain—but later than its leveling—was a temple of Queen Tausert as sole ruler, Tausert, setep en Mut, Sat Ra, mery Amen, who has left us in *foundation deposits 500 scarabs and plaques of colored glazes with cartouches, and 1200 glazed objects besides three slabs with the names.*

Then south of that is the so-called temple of Amenhotep III, which is really the funereal temple of Merenptah. *That beast smashed up all the statues and sculptures of Amenhotep II to put into his foundations, and wrecked the gorgeous temple behind the colossi for building material.* We have a few fine pieces of Amenhotep III; and the upper half of a fine black granite statue of Merenptah.

I am now going to clear two small temples north of the Ramesseum, so you see we are getting through the field of temples here at a pretty good rate. Quibell is doing the Ramesseum, and I am doing the others. We make complete plans of all the buildings and foundations. This sort of clearing up is what "exploration" should be, and not merely the elaborate clearing out of one building. The whole lot of half a dozen temple sites we shall clear up, and fix historically, for about \$2500 or \$3000. . . . You can make any use you like of this information for publishing.

I bought a piece of a stele dedicated by the "royal son, 'ahmes, called Sa'pa'r," explaining his name. He is figured as a boy.

Bant anta was probably mother of Merenptah, as her name occurs in his temple ruins, but no other relatives. Quibell and his sister are well and desire to be remembered to you. Hoping to see you out here next year,

Yours very sincerely,

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE.

The scene of the above excavations was published as the frontispiece of the January BIBLICAL WORLD of the current year, though it was impossible to include all the territory covered, in one view. Ancient Thebes comprised two cities: on the east bank of the Nile, the city of the living; on the west bank, the city of the dead. The tall cliffs on the west shoresweep back from the river in a wide curve, forming a semi-circular plain like a vast amphi-

theater nearly two miles across. In the face of the cliffs, plainly visible in our views, the tombs of the new empire nobles are hewn out, while back of them in a lonely valley are the great rock tombs of the new empire kings. In the days of pyramid building, the king built to the eastward of his pyramid, a chapel or temple in which he was honored after death. Just so in the new empire to the eastward of his tomb chamber now cut in the mountain, the Pharaoh built a great funereal chapel or temple, and these temples,



though now in sad ruins, stretch along the Theban plain in imposing array at the foot of the cliffs. It is among these sanctuaries that Mr. Petrie is now working.

The Ramesseum, in spite of its wrecked condition the most beautiful in the series, has long been thought to be the work of Ramses II, and hence its name. Nevertheless it is always a question, especially in the nineteenth dynasty, whether or not a king may have appropriated any structure bearing his name. For example, Ramses II pulled down the funereal temple of Userstes II's pyramid at Illahun, merely for the sake of the material. At Bubastis in the Delta he built into his temple, great blocks bearing the name Usertesen III (British Mus. No. 1102), which of course he filched from some

building of the latter. But Mr. Petrie's results at the Ramesseum, as the funeral temple in our first illustration is called, show that the building really belongs to Ramses II, in material as well as structure. Directly in the foreground are the fragments of a monolithic granite colossus of Ramses II, which stood over 60 feet in height, and weighed about 1200 tons. Looking through the pillars at the extreme right, the mud brick arches which once formed the cellar of the temple storehouse, are visible in the distance. Under three of these arches, Mr. Petrie is now living.



Just to the southward of the Ramesseum (to the left of our view, but out of range), Mr. Petrie has identified the almost obliterated ruins of Tahutmes IV's temple, and still further south the tomb of the goldsmith, Khonsu arduus. Proceeding in the same direction, according the letter, the result has been the discovery of a temple, belonging to a queen, living in the uncertain days at the close of the nineteenth dynasty, Tausert, doubtless the period in which the exodus of the Hebrews took place. The discovery of this temple, disclosing the queen "as sole ruler," though she has hitherto been thought to have been simply a queen consort (wife of Sa-ptah), will throw much light on this very obscure period. A foundation deposit, like that of the Dêr-el-bahri

temple, of which we spoke in the January Notes, was also found in this queen's sanctuary. As we there stated, it answers in general to our corner stone deposit; note the large list of objects found in this case.

Perhaps the most interesting results of Mr. Petrie's work here is the explanation of the disappearance of the great temple just behind the colossi of the plain (see second view). These colossi are statues of Amenhotep III, such as every king was accustomed to place on either side of the entrance of a temple guarding the portal. The northern statue of these two is the famous colossus of Memnon, so well known in classic history, from its having uttered a cry at sunrise every day. Both are monolithic, of a hard, sandy conglomerate, and before the loss of the crown must have stood 60 feet high, and weighed 1175 tons each. The temple before which they stood has however completely disappeared, as is evident in the view. The present excavations now show that this disappearance is primarily due to "that beast" Merenptah, who it seems was not content merely to obtain for his own funereal temple near at hand, but viciously and wantonly used as such the "statuary and sculptures" which adorned the "gorgeous temple behind the colossi." It was then probably used as quarry by any and everybody. This discovery serves to intensify the grudge we already owe Merenptah, for he has long been notorious for the wholesale appropriation of predecessors' work of whatever character. Even his own father, Ramses II failed to escape; for example, the Berlin colossus of the latter, bears the name of Merenptah, which he coolly engraved upon the breast, though he did not venture to erase his father's name. A Berlin statue of one of the Amenemhet's was also appropriated by this same despicable insatiate. The arbitrary assumption by many, that Merenptah is the Pharaoh of the Exodus is probably familiar to the reader.

Some of the results of these excavations will find their way into the Haskell Oriental Museum of the University of Chicago, and any interested reader will be welcome to inspect them there. Should any reader desire to show a substantial interest in the above investigations, for the sake of historical and archæological science as it concerns the Old Testament, not to say also our Oriental Museum, nothing would be more fitting and profitable. It will be seen from the letter, how much the judicious expenditure of a comparatively small sum of money will do.